

TRIGGER WARNING



sarah rupp

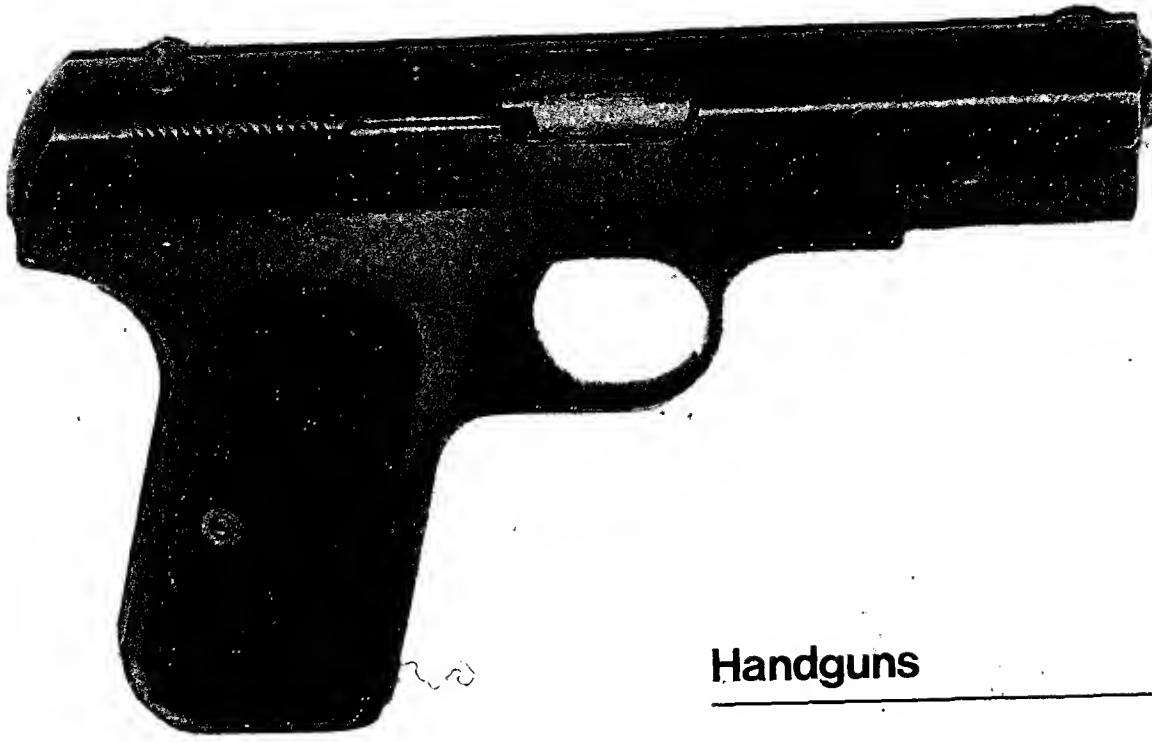
This essay originally appeared in MASK Magazine (The Depravity Issue, June 2016)

Sarah is a writer in Richmond, VA who is really into feral cat colonies, 70s Italian Marxist-Feminism, and how human hands evolved over time to better punch the faces of human fascists.



We used to shoot up bottles in the abandoned mall when I was a teenager. Kind of dystopic, but in an endearing way. We never killed anything. We killed the Hot Topic sign, we killed the cherubs on the mossy fountain. I don't give a shit about gun control, just like I don't give two shits about voting, GMOs, or recycling. Liberal civil society causes give me the creeps. I'm a bad person, a Generation Y (say it always in a whine, like, why?) I am southern, but my accent has softened. My mom thinks I willed it away, along with my blue eyes. Her dad, by the way, shot a man in a duel because that man had accidentally killed his favorite hunting dog. I was born in the last hacking cough of capitalism, into the furnace of the Anthropocene.

I've had guns pulled on me twice. Once was in high school, when I witnessed a drug deal in the suburbs. The other time was when I got robbed while feeding raccoons stolen Twinkies behind Laney College. The guy I lost my virginity to pistol-whipped an undercover cop in a drug deal. He might still be in jail, which sucks even though he sucked. When I was deported from Canada, I was escorted through airport security by two Mounties carrying rifles. I've been threatened with guns way more than I even know. I googled myself once and a thread came up on *Storm Front*, a white supremacist forum, and they were talking about shooting me. And do you remember the DC sniper? I'm from there and in elementary school we weren't allowed outside for recess because they didn't want us to get shot.



Handguns

I have suicidal tendencies. I do DBT for it. I take Lexapro, Wellbutrin, Klonopin, and Adderall every day, like a cyborg. I went to a psych ward, once. My suicide note was about how existentially devastating the idea of having to work every day until I die was for me. How I was lonely. How I was sorry. How I was done.

2.

So I can't own a gun, because my history of mental health issues would prevent me from buying one legally, even in a state as lax as Virginia, where you are more likely to get carded when you're buying cigarettes than when you're buying a revolver. And I probably shouldn't own a gun. My grandparent shot himself in the head in the John Marshall Hotel, which I can see the sign for from this window. My cousin wrote the name of the man he secretly loved on his mirror before he shot himself in Rocky Mount. A childhood friend ran out of Adderall while his parents were divorcing and he shot himself, too. But I want a gun.

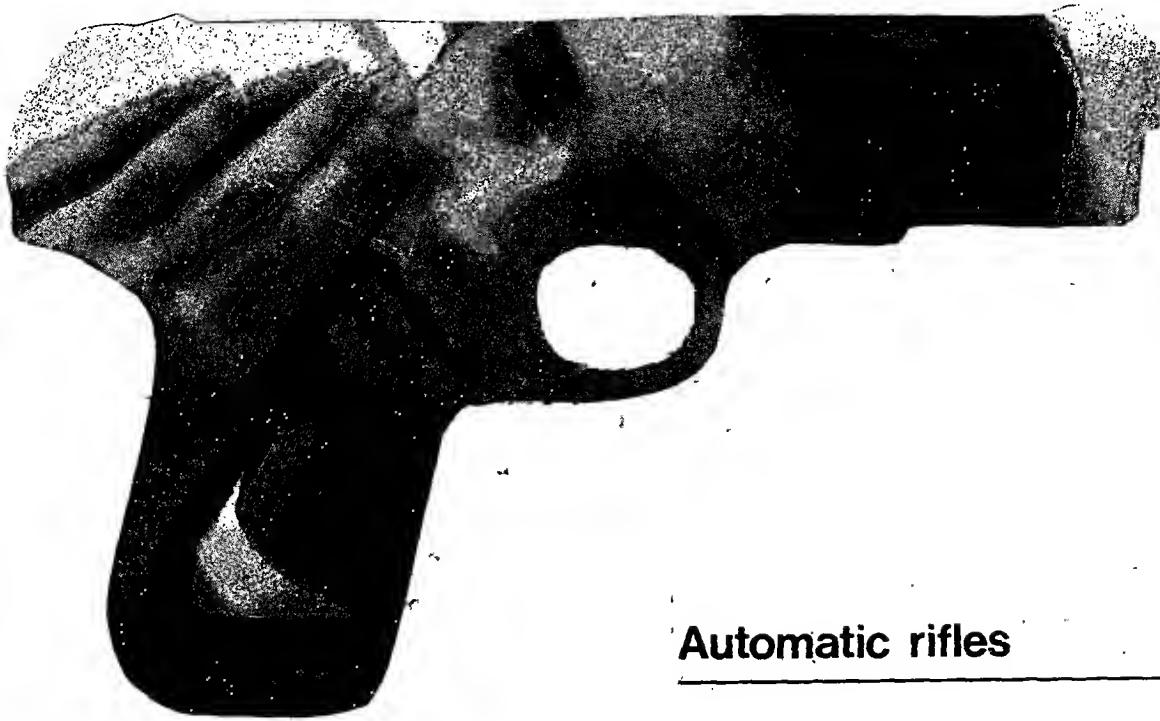




Machine-guns

I want a gun because I'm queer, and I look queer. I want a gun because I am out of the closet. I want a gun because I'm a puntable five feet tall, heavily tattooed, and a woman. I want a gun because I spend every Saturday at the lesbian bar, one that looks eerily like Pulse, except our outdoor courtyard has a beach volleyball court. I want a gun because I've been raped by a man. I want a gun because I've been stalked by a man. I want a gun because my friend was stabbed to death by a man. I want a gun because I've been followed home by male strangers – not once, but twice. I want a gun because one day I think all of my friends and I are going to need guns when we defend our future trailer park commune from the corn warlords of the apocalypse. I want a gun because I kind of miss shooting beer bottles in the deserted mall. And I know capitalism, and I know myself: malls and beer cans will only get emptier and emptier.



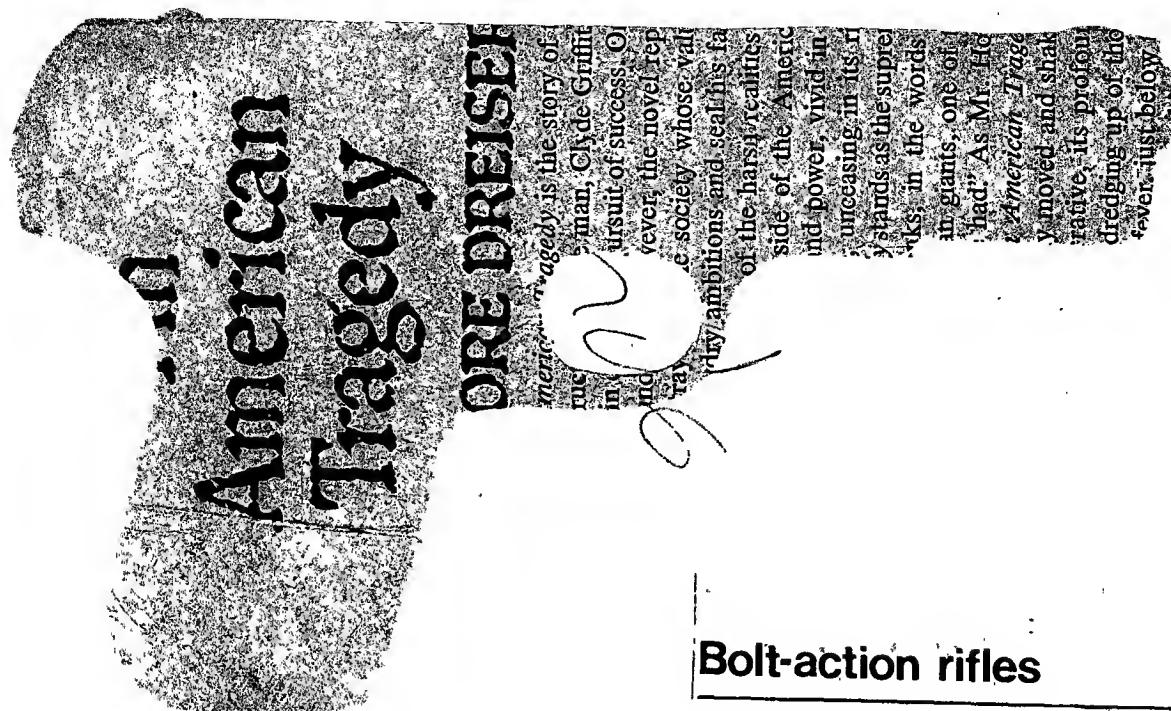


Automatic rifles

I want a gun because men have guns and men are a threat to my safety. I want a gun because Virginia, where I live, is the site of the second largest mass shooting in modern US history. I want a gun because I am a known antifa organizer in a city that is not completely down with that. I want a gun because my very existence antagonizes the fascists here, who would hate me even if I didn't do work explicitly against them. I want a gun because you know those assholes have a shit ton of guns. A local anarcho-capitalist, Kal Molinet, openly carried an assault weapon to the vigil here in Richmond for the Orlando shooting. Derrick Davis from the fascist Traditionalist Worker Party carried a gun while livestreaming our anti-Trump march here. That all makes me want a gun more than ever. I want a gun for when I see a cop pull a gun on a black man again. I want a gun because my upstairs neighbors are football playing bros and they have guns. I want a gun because I hope one day we all have a Take Your Gun to Work Day and then there would be no more bosses. That would solve one part of my suicide note.

But I can't buy a gun. Someone should buy me a gun.



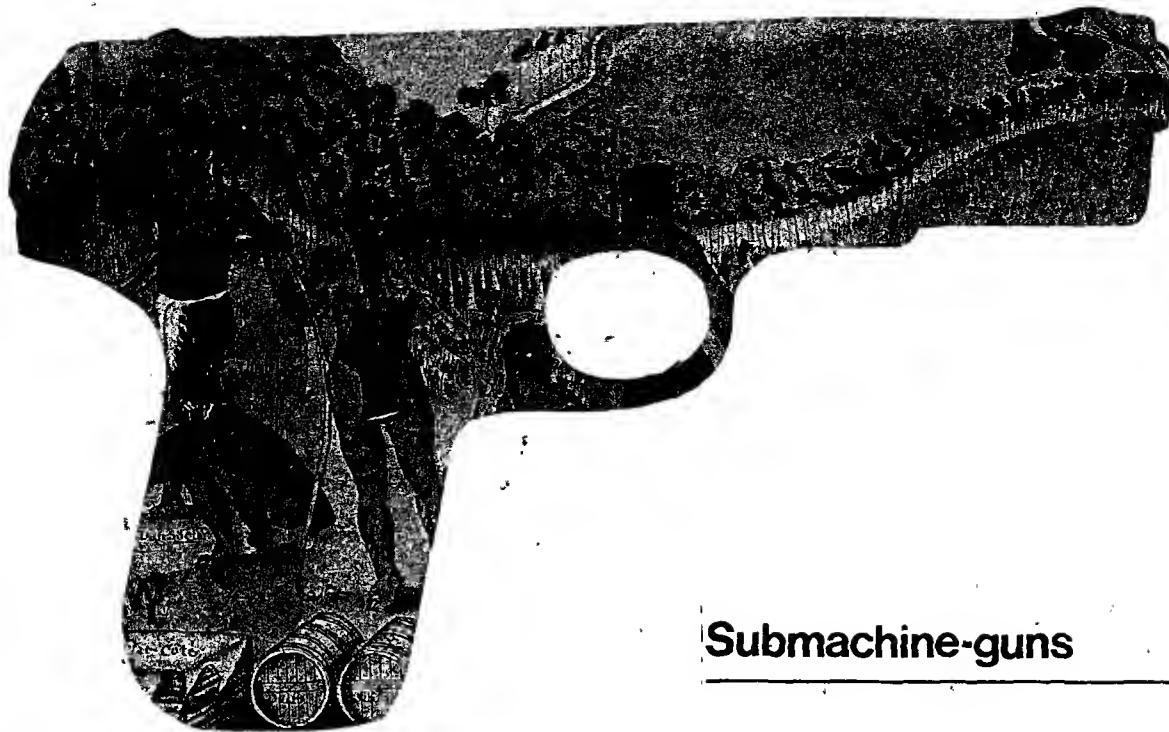


Bolt-action rifles

We often see the media portray mass shooters as mentally ill, but that's only true if you consider masculinity a mental illness. The attack in Orlando wasn't galvanized by anything other than homophobia. And you know what sucks? Queer people are four times more likely to make a suicide attempt than straight people. Which means queer people who have struggled to stay alive cannot own guns in most states. There is also incessant talk by media pundits of allowing the FBI to deprive anyone on watch lists of the right to buy firearms. Which means a whole lot of our friends won't be able to buy guns legally.

5.





Submachine-guns

Women and teenage girls should be armed. In the 70s, there were a string of cases where feminists shot men in self-defense. Yvonne Wanrow, a Native American woman, shot a man who molested her son. Inez Garcia was a Latina woman who shot her rapist. Dessie Woods was a black woman in Georgia who shot a man who tried to rape her and her friend while they were hitchhiking. More recently, a sex worker named Heather in West Virginia shot a man in self-defense, and he ended up being the serial killer Neal Falls. And then of course, there is the case of Marissa Alexander, who shot her husband in self-defense in 2012.

A few days after the homophobic massacre at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, MSNBC and Fox dropped coverage of the shooting in favor of picking up the story of the little boy who was killed by an alligator at Disney World. MSNBC even went so far as to say that that particular tragedy was on the same level of the Pulse shooting. But let me get something "straight": the news equates the life of one dead boy to the lives of 49 queer people because America values children and reproductive futurity above the lives of those who are queer. If you don't assimilate, you are one-forty ninth as important as a young American boy.

RY MAN HAS HIS
VORITE TOOL.

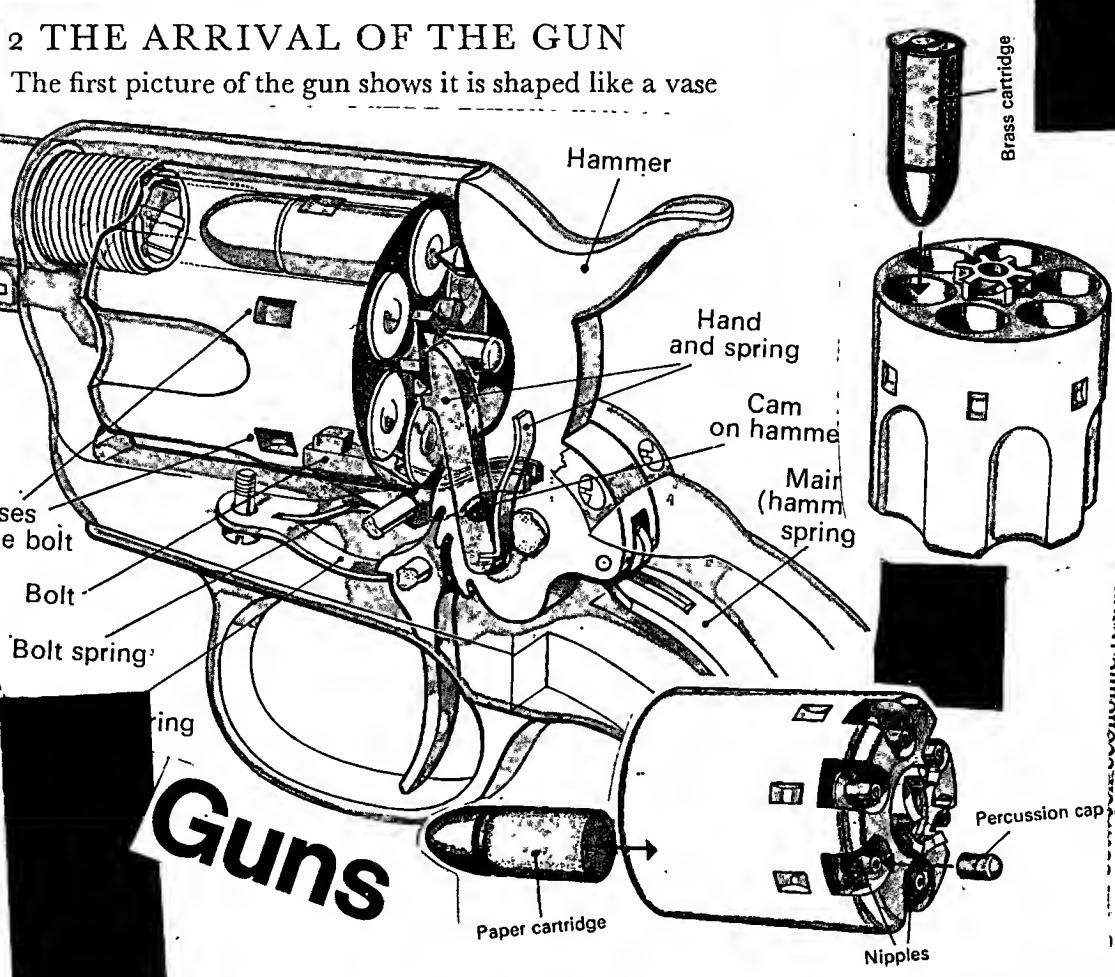
2 THE ARRIVAL OF THE GUN

The first picture of the gun shows it is shaped like a vase

as men study ballistics

While every care has been taken to ensure that the material appearing in this book is factually accurate, it is probable that in some cases slight alterations might ultimately be found necessary—particularly with the appearance on the market of new types of weapons. The authors and the editor would therefore be pleased to hear of any such amendments which have escaped their notice or which have been announced after Military Small Arms had gone to press. Please write care of the publishers (Arms and Armour Press, 16 Hampstead High Street, London NW3 1PR, England); all aid will be gratefully acknowledged.

Guns

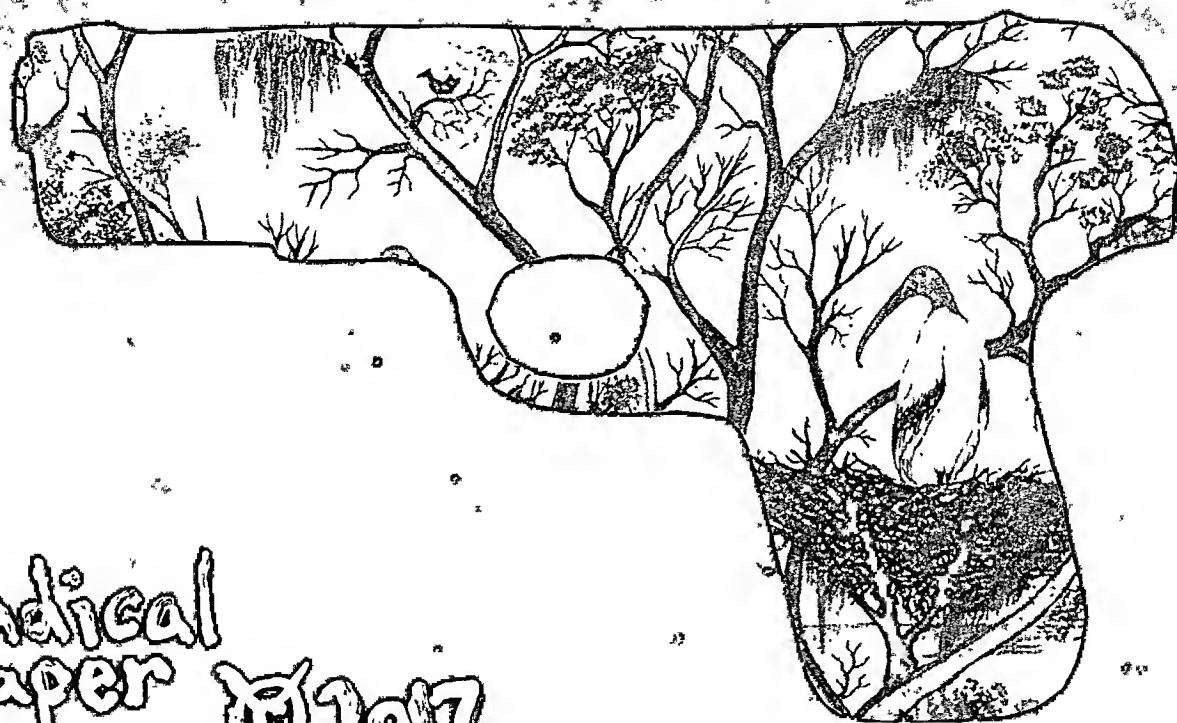


Any standing army – including the police – are a threat to our personal liberties. This is a core tenet of Marxism. Sometimes I think about the trial of Louise Michel in the Paris Commune, which you can find a transcript of on Commune Edition's website. The Paris Commune was armed and prepared for self-defense; women led different brigades on the barricades, including Michel. During her trial, the judge asked Michel why she thought she was on trial, to which she responded: "All it takes is a black flag and a broomstick."

Queer people, women, people of color, anarchists, and communists will always be on trial in capitalism. Any visible markers of queerness or antagonistic politics – be they ontological or spatial – put the lives of queers in jeopardy. We all have our own black flags or broomsticks. We are not safe in our bodies, in our homes, in our clubs, in our schools, in our streets. My friend once joked that my Rosa Luxemburg tattoo will one day be cheese grated off my body by reactionaries. Luxemburg, by the way, was also shot to death by fascists. But she died fighting, and so should we. I'll see you on the barricades, in the glass-covered, bloodstained streets.

5, discuss the meaning of labor, (c) capital, (d) land.





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